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In general, all these religious celebrations are accompanied by national songs, dances, and among the Pshavs by the shooting of guns to test their marksmanship (*khabakhi*). The Khevsurs also have *khabakhi,* not during religious festivals, but during the ceremonies held in commemoration of the dead. These holidays principally afford an opportunity for excessive eating and drinking enormous quantities of the sacred beer, and usually end in a fight.

Dr. Radde[43] relates that during his visit to Khevsuria he found the whole congregation of a community, including the dignitaries of the sanctuary, after the holiday celebration, dead drunk and stretched out on the "sacred" grounds of the *Khati* in a deep sleep and snoring loudly.

The *Khevis-beri* and the *dekanozis,* in addition to their religious duties, also handle the judicial and administrative affairs of the country. Thus, for example, every year, beginning the 8th of October (if it does not fall on a fast day) until the 10th of November, the Pshav *khevis-beris* take the sacred standard (*drosha*) from one of the principal sanctuaries in Pshavia, the *Khati* of *Lashris-jvari,* and, accompanied by a group of horsemen, visit every village in the country, administering justice and fining the individuals found guilty of disobedience of the regulations of established custom.

The influence of the *khevis-beri*[a] of the sanctuary of *Lashris-jvari* in Pshavia was in times past so great upon all twelve communities forming the Pshav people,[44] that when they had decided to undertake, with the sacred *drosha* in their hands, a war against the neighboring Kists, and the rumor about this spread over the country, every man without exception made haste to the meeting place, which was in the defile of Maturi (*Maturis Khevi*). In two or three days everyone was present at the meeting place, well armed and carrying his own ration of provisions, enough to last for two weeks in expedition. "Woe to the man," writes R. D. Eristov,[45] "who will not present himself under the standard

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[43] Radde: c, 259.
[44] Pshavia, 250-1.
[45] Eristov: a, 137-8.

[a] [i.e., religious personnel; see cat. 116, p 29 ff. --Analyst]

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(*drosha*) of the *Khati* . . . . Then there is no life for him: he must pay a great fine as punishment, he is despised by his fellow-members of the community, and the wrath of the *Khati* is upon him . . . ."

Summoned in such a way, the Pshav army attacked the Kists and seized their herds and flocks, and returned home. The booty was divided into three parts. One part was given to the *Khati* as a thank-offering for the success of the expedition. Another part was sent to the head of the administration, called *mouravi* in Georgian, the *pristav* of the Russian government; and the third part of the prize was divided among the participants in the expedition. For every captive a ransom of sixty rubles was demanded, which was given in full to the sanctuary of *Lashris-jvari*. The ransom for a head, if taken from the slain, was one ox and one sheep. Returning from their expedition, the Khevsurs carried as trophies, according to the existing custom, the right arms cut off from slain enemies. These arms were fastened usually upon the doors of the houses. They were seen and reported by investigators who visited Khevsuria. Thus Dr. G. Radde,[46] who was there in the summer of 1876, saw such trophies in the villages of Guro and Shatil nailed on the walls of the Khevsur towers. "Man sah an der nord-seite dieses Thurmes, im Dorfe Guro," writes Dr. Radde, "drei Lesginer-oder Kisten-Haende angenagelt. Das waren doch Trophaeen aus den fuenfziger Jahren. Bisweilen befinded sich an solchen Haenden noch ein Theil des Unterarms. . . ." And further[47] he relates that he found the hand-trophies also in the village of Shatil. "Die Hauser des Dorfes Schatil verden durch hohe starke Schiefermauern gebildet. Gleich unten sahen wir neuen Haende unter dem Carniese angenagelt."

The officials of the Russian government many times used the influence of the *khevis-beri* and the standard (*drosha*) of *Lashris-jvari* when it was necessary to call the people together.

The influence of the attendants of the sanctuaries upon the country and the power which they exercised upon the people is

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[46] Radde: a.
[47] *Ibid.*